

PREFACE

Missouri citizens and employers must have the proper tools if they are going to successfully compete in the current high tech global economy. Linking an effective workforce development system with aggressive economic development is the key to ensure that Missouri can successfully compete in the global market. The agencies involved in delivering employment and training programs must work together to keep Missouri's workforce one of the best in the world and to improve our citizens' quality of life. Integration of services will help improve the State's prosperity.

Missouri's economy is stronger than it has been in a generation with high-skilled jobs growing at a rapid rate. However, many employers are finding it increasingly difficult to attract qualified workers for either entry-level or high-skilled jobs. In addition, many workers with little or no skills feel trapped in low-wage, dead-end jobs. Rapidly changing technology and the move to a global economy requires life long learning in the workforce.

Reforms under the Workforce Investment Act will move Missouri's current One-Stop Career Center initiative to the next level by mandating integrated service delivery at the community level. A consolidated delivery system will ensure that job seekers and employers have access to high quality labor market information and services. The One-Stop Career Center service delivery system is being designed with the participation of private sector employers, labor unions, education, and community groups.

Now is the right time to move Missouri in ***new directions*** – creating a world class workforce development system.

The Workforce Development Transition Team